

REMARKS

Claims 1-19 are pending in the present application. The examiner objected to the Abstract and the title. In addition, claims 1-11, 14-15, and 17-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102, and claims 12-13 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103. Applicant has provided a substitute Abstract and has amended the title. No new matter has been introduced.

Specification Objections

The title was objected to for being unresponsive. Applicant has amended the title as requested by the Examiner. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this objection are respectfully requested.

The Abstract was objected to as being of improper format. Applicant has provided a substitute Abstract to replace the Abstract originally filed. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this objection are respectfully requested.

Section 102 Rejections

Claims 1-11, 14-15, and 17-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,219,045 (Leahy, *et al.*).

Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

In order for a reference to anticipate under section 102, it must disclose, either explicitly, or under the principle of inherency, every claimed limitation of the claimed invention.

Applicant's independent claims 1 and 14 are directed to virtual environment systems that include, *inter alia*, "an acoustic localizer adapted to determine the location of sound sources in a local environment" (claim 1) and "acoustic localizing means for determining the location of sound sources in a local environment" (claim 14). Claim 15 is directed to "remotely experiencing a remote world from a local environment" and

includes, *inter alia*, “an acoustic localizer in the local environment . . . adapted to detect the position of sound sources”.

Leahy is directed to a network architecture for a chat room. Leahy’s system includes one or more client systems through which each user interacts, and each client system includes a GUI that displays a visual representation of the chat room, including avatars representing at least some of the participants to a given user. Leahy’s system also includes a chat processor that can send and receive messages containing conversation. However, there is no disclosure in Leahy of an acoustic localizer that can determine the location of a sound source in a local environment. Leahy also discloses displaying and changing the position of an avatar in the chat room in response to input, such as a mouse movement. However, a chat room is not a virtual environment, and there is no disclosure in Leahy that the position of an avatar represents the location or position of a sound source in a local environment.

Thus, applicant urges that Leahy does not disclose “an acoustic localizer adapted to determine the location of sound sources in a local environment” as recited in claim 1, an “acoustic localizing means for determining the location of sound sources in a local environment” as recited in claim 14, or “an acoustic localizer in the local environment . . . adapted to detect the position of sound sources” as recited in claim 15, and therefore Leahy does anticipate claims 1, 14, and 15. Reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections are respectfully requested.

Claims 2-11 depend from claim 1, and claims 17-19 depend from claim 15, and are thus patentable for the same reasons as claims 1 and 15, respectively. Reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections are respectfully requested.

Section 103 Rejections

Claims 12-13 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Leahy in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,584,439 (Geilhufe, *et al.*).

Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

Applicant urges that the Examiner has failed to make out a *prima facie* case of obviousness for these rejections. To establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, three basic criteria must be met. First, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine reference teachings. Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. Finally, the combination of prior art references must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. The teaching or suggestion to make the claimed combination and the reasonable expectation of success must both be found in the prior art and not based on applicant's disclosure.

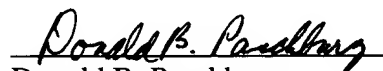
Claims 12-13 depend from claim 1, and claim 16 depends from claim 15. Claim 12 is directed to an I/O device wherein "operations . . . are commanded by said user through voice commands. Claim 13 includes "a speech recognition module adapted to translate voice commands for said user . . .". Claim 16 is directed to a method wherein "said . . . I/O device . . . is controlled by . . . voice commands from said user . . .". The Action concedes that Leahy does not teach voice commands, but then cites Geilhufe as teaching a GUI that uses voice commands to control input from a user. However, as discussed above, Leahy fails to teach or suggest "an acoustic localizer adapted to determine the location of sound sources in a local environment" or "an acoustic localizer . . . adapted to detect the position of sound sources", as recited in independent claims 1 and 15, and Geilhufe does not correct these deficiencies. Applicant urges that a *prima facie* case of obviousness against dependent claims 12-13 and 16 cannot be maintained based on the combination of Leahy and Geilhufe. Reconsideration and withdrawal of these section 103 rejections are respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

Applicant urges that claims 1-19 are in condition for allowance for at least the reasons stated. Early and favorable action on this case is respectfully requested.

Respectfully Submitted,

Date: February 22, 2005


Donald B. Paschburg
Reg. No. 33,753
Attorney for Applicants

Mailing Address:
SIEMENS CORPORATION
Intellectual Property Department
5th Floor
170 Wood Avenue South
Iselin, New Jersey 08830
(732) 321-3191
(732) 321-3030 (FAX)